report has asked India to take strict measures to counter narcotics trafficking and addiction;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Indian drug traffickers have made huge , shipments of heroin to the US and Canada; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) The report exhorts almost all countries to take more effective counter narcotics measures.

(b) Though it is suspected that containerized cargo is being used for shipment of drugs to Western countries, no case of export of large shipments of heroin *to* USA and Canada has come to the notice of the Narcotics Control Bureau during 1994 nor any such case was reported to the Bureau by the counter narcotics authorities of USA or Canada.

(c) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain the utmost vigil and step up enforcement efforts under the stringent provisions contained in NDPS Act. Training is being imparted to officers ' to improve their effectiveness. Vehicles and communication equipments have been provided. Coast Guards, who are "^ deployed on coastal borders have been vested with the powers under the Customs Act to interdict narcotic drugs on the border in addition to the Central and State Government enforcement agencies empowered under the NDPS Act.

Ncwsitem on Public Sector Banks

5243. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Sarvjanik Kshetra Ke bankon Ki bakaya raashi mein vndhi" appearing in the Dainik Jagran of 4th August, 1994;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

Smuggling of Gold by Airlines Officials

5244. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some officials of the Airlines have been found involved in gold smuggling;

(b) if so, whether any investigation has been made therein and if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) the action taken in the matter;

(d) the number of gold smuggling cases that were detected in 1994 and so far; and

(e) whether such cases are on the rise and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. Some cases of attempt to smuggle gold by Airlines employees have been detected. Departmental Adjudication proceedings for imposition of penalty & action under Cofeposa wheresoever warranted has been taken.

(d) and (e) Gold weighing 1147 Kg. valued at Rs. 53.35 crores was seized during 1994. Available reports indicate decline in smuggling of gold.